Delete the paragraph on page 5, lines 15-16, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Figures 6A-6B show a flow chart illustrating the function of providing add-on subscriptions according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Delete the paragraph on page 6, lines 12-14, and replace it with the following paragraph:

In addition to the added convenience, reduced confusion and the elimination of the "crossed-in-the-mail" problem, the present invention would be attractive to consumers because of various other incentives apparent from the following description.

Delete the paragraph on page 6, lines 15-23, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Certain embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the figures. A schematic of one system 100 according to one embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figure 1. In general, the system 100 includes a central agent 110 coupled to a plurality of fulfillment houses 120 (fulfillment house 120-1 being the first of the plurality, fulfillment house 120-2 being the second of the plurality and fulfillment house 120-N being the Nth of the plurality) and a plurality of consumers 130 (consumer 130-1 being the first consumer of the plurality, consumer 130-2 being the second consumer of the plurality and consumer 130-N being the Nth consumer of the plurality). In the present embodiment, the central agent 110 is coupled to the Internet (worldwide web) over which communication is made with the consumers 130. More specifically, the central agent 110 provides a web site through which it offers to the consumers 130 the various services described herein. Thus, each consumer 130 has a consumer

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interface device, such as a personal computer, set-top box, portable device, or the like to access the web.

Delete the paragraph on page 8, lines 8-17, and replace it with the following paragraph:

The central agent 110 also includes a presentation server farm 220. The presentation server farm 220 contains the servers that provide the functionality associated with the first and second layers of the architecture namely, the logical presentation layer and the application layer. Specifically, the presentation server farm 220 includes logical presentation servers 222 that are programmed to provide the GUI resident on the web page accessed by the consumers 130. Also part of the presentation server farm 220 are the application servers 224. The application servers 224 provide the support and logic for the GUI created by the logical presentation servers 222. As noted above, the application servers 224 also provide the business rules that govern the operation of the central agent 110. Such operation will be discussed in detail below with references to Figures 4A-4C, 5, 6A-6B and 7.

Delete the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 13 and ending on page 12, line 2 and replace it with the following paragraph:

Having described the overall architecture of the central agent 110, the details of each database will now be described in greater detail with reference to Figures 3A-3D. It is to be understood that the following descriptions of the databases are merely representative of one logical arrangement of the information contained therein. Accordingly, as used herein, to say that information is organized in a particular manner does not necessitate a particular physical

arrangement but neither a particular logical association. Alternate embodiments of the present invention include different arrangements of the information. For example, the same information may be contained in fewer or more databases. It is also to be understood that the information shown as being contained in any particular field is illustrative; for example, the information shown as being contained within the consumer field of the household database 242 may actually be comprised of several more specific fields (e.g., first name, surname, street address, apartment number, city, state, zip code, etc.).

Delete the first full paragraph on page 12, lines 3-8 and replace it with the following paragraph:

Turning first to Figure 3A, the three-level structure of the household database 242 is shown. The first level in the household database 242 is the household identifier (ID). As described in detail below, the household identifier, as the name implies, is a random number that identifies each household. Each household ID corresponds to one or more credit card numbers – the second level of the household database 242. Each credit card number, in turn, corresponds to one or more consumers, shown as the third level of the database 242.

Delete the third full paragraph on page 12, lines 13-21 and replace it with the following paragraph:

The subscription database 244 is shown in Figure 3B. In general the subscription database 244 contains the subscription information received from the fulfillment houses 120. More specifically, each subscription is assigned a subscription number. The subscription

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information includes consumer name, consumer address, magazine ID, current amount charged for the subscription, future amount charged for the subscription, expiration date of the subscription, channel of sale of the subscription, and the origination date of the subscription. The purpose of these field will be described below. In the present embodiment, all of the subscription information is obtained from the fulfillment houses 120 via the business to business and database maintenance gateway 280.

Delete the paragraph on page 13, lines 3-7, and replace it with the following paragraph:

The add-on database 246 will now be described with reference to Figure 3C. Each record in the add-on database 246 stores subscription information corresponding to a single awarded add-on subscription identified by an add-on number. As such, the add-on database 246 includes the following fields: consumer name, consumer address, magazine ID and expiration date.

Delete the paragraph on page 13, lines 8-20 and replace it with the following paragraph:

The magazine database 248 will now be described with reference to Figure 3D. The magazine database 248 is best described as a three level database. The first level of the database includes publisher and fulfillment house information because there is a one-to-one correspondence between publisher and fulfillment house for a particular subscription, the two fields are included in the same level. Magazine identifying information, namely magazine ID and magazine title, are included in the second level. As shown, more than one magazine ID and magazine title correspond to each publisher and fulfillment house. Because there is one-to-one correspondence between magazine ID and magazine title, both fields are included together in the

second level. Finally, the magazine term (e.g., in months) and the half basic rate of the magazine are included in the third level. To summarize the magazine information in the magazine database 248, each publisher utilizes a specific fulfillment house to fill orders for one or more magazine titles. Each magazine title corresponds to a unique magazine ID, which in turn corresponds to a term and half basic rate.

Delete the paragraph on page 13, line 21 through page 14, line 4, and replace it with the following paragraph:

As can be seen from Figures 3A through 3D, the four databases are interrelated. Thus, by way of example, household 000 0001 includes Sandra Smith and Dick Smith. As identified in the Subscription Database 244, the household (by way of Sandra Smith) includes subscriptions 0000 0001 and FFFF FFFF. These subscriptions correspond to magazine ID's TIM 247 and SPI 126. These magazines ID's, in turn, correspond to particular entries in the Magazine Database 248. Additionally, add-on subscription 0000 0001 also corresponds to household 0000 0001. The details of the interrelation of these databases in described below.

Delete the paragraph on page 14, lines 5-12, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Having described the components of the present embodiment, the operation of the system 100 will now be described with referenced to Figures 4A-4B, 5, 6A-6B, and 7, and continuing reference to Figures 1, 2 and 3A-3B. Turning first to Figures 4A and 4B, the overall operation of the system 100 will now be described. As an initial step, with reference to Figure 4A, the central agent 110 receives the vertically stored subscription data from the fulfillment houses (step 410).

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More specifically, the central agent 110 receives the subscription data from the fulfillment houses via the business to business and database maintenance gateway 282. Once subscription data is received, the central agent 110 reorganizes the data "horizontally", by household (step 415).

Delete the paragraph on page 15, line 18 through page 16, line 6, and replace it with the following paragraph:

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Once the consumer 130 is presented with all subscriptions possibly corresponding to the consumer's household, with reference to Figure 4B, the consumer 130 selects which subscriptions correspond to her household (step 440). Moreover, the consumer 130 selects the subscriptions she wishes to link to the credit card number. If a consumer or household has more than one credit card number associated therewith, a central agent 110 requests that the consumer 130 select one credit card number to which the subscriptions will be linked and the appropriate charges applied. Thus, the central agent 110 receives the consumer's subscription links and updates the databases (step 445). More specifically, for each subscription that is linked to the credit card, the central agent 110 updates the linked field in the subscription database 244 to reflect that the subscription has been linked. Additionally, the central agent 110 updates the household ID field in each record of the subscription database 244 corresponding to a subscription identified as corresponding to the consumer's household.

Delete the paragraph on page 16, lines 7-14, and replace it with the following paragraph:

As described to the consumer 130 on the web site, in the present embodiment, the agreement to link a subscription equates to an agreement to renew the subscription. Accordingly, as described with reference to Figure 7, the consumer 130 will be billed automatically upon the normal expiration of the subscription. Furthermore, in the present embodiment, each consumer 130 will be automatically billed upon each successive expiration of each linked subscription until the consumer 130 affirmatively cancels the subscription. Such continuous service is described more fully in applicant's co-pending Patent Application Number 08/762,007, now U.S. Patent No. 6,014,641, herein incorporated by reference.

Delete the paragraph on page 16, lines 15-19, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Because each link equates to a promise to renew a subscription, the consumer 130 is in essence renewing several subscriptions at the same time. Consequently, the central agent 110 is able to calculate and transmit to the consumer 130 possible add-on subscription options (step 450). The steps of calculating and transmitting potential add-ons is described in greater detail with reference to Figures 6A and 6B.

Delete the paragraph on page 16, line 22 through page 17, line 3, and replace it with the following paragraph:

As is explained to the consumer 130, the selected add-ons will be linked to the consumer's household (step 460). The consumer 130 will receive the add-ons for free until a specified expiration date, at which time the consumer will have cancelled the subscription or

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been automatically billed for the subscription. Like other linked subscriptions, the non-cancelled add-ons will also revert to the continuous service model described above.

Delete the paragraph on page 17, lines 4-8, and replace it with the following paragraph:

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Once the consumer 130 has linked subscriptions and selected any available add-ons, with reference to Figure 4C, the central agent 110 extracts transaction information from the databases (step 465). More specifically, the database server farm 240 extracts information concerning linked subscriptions and transmits it via the fulfillment and merchant processing gateway 282 to the enterprise server 286. This transaction information is used for both the fulfillment and billing of subscriptions.

Delete the paragraph on page 20, lines 8-15, and replace it with the following paragraph:

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The process of linking subscriptions and calculating and transmitting add-on options to the consumer 130 will now be described with reference to Figure 6A and 6B. In the present embodiment, the first step in allowing the consumer 130 linked subscriptions is excluding or preventing the consumer from linking subscriptions that do not qualify (step 605). For example, in the present embodiment, subscriptions having an origination date earlier than a specified date are not entitled to being linked. Additionally, those subscriptions made through a specified channel of sale (as indicated in the subscription database 244), such as a low quality PDS, do not qualify for linking.

Delete the paragraph on page 25, lines 8-14, and replace it with the following paragraph:

CPU 810 executes program code stored in one or more RAM 820, ROM 830, and storage device 840 to carry out the functions and acts described above in connection with Figures 4A-4C, 5, 6A-6B and 7. CPU 810 preferably comprises at least one high-speed digital data processor, such as those sold under the trademark INTEL PENTIUM. CPU 810 also interacts with the interface devices 860, 870 to communicate with consumers and fulfillment houses. CPU 810 interacts with RAM 820, ROM 830, storage device 840 and interface device 860, 870 according to conventional processing and computing techniques.

Delete the paragraph on page 25, line 20 through page 26, line 5, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Storage device 840 contains a transaction processor 842 to household database 844, subscription database 846, magazine database 848 and add-on database 850. The transaction processor 842 maintains, calculates, and accesses data stored in the databases and generates fulfillment and billing records, as described above in connection with Figures 4A-4C, 5, 6A-6B and 7. Preferably, transaction processor 842 encrypts data before transmission according to conventional encryption techniques. Furthermore, transaction processor 842 comprises a separate conventional CPU/microprocessor such as those sold under the trademark INETL PENTIUM. In an alternate embodiment, transaction processor 842 comprises a portion of 810. The contents of the databases is essentially that as described above to Figures 3A-3D.

A marked-up version of the changes made by amendment is attached.